

What's Wrong with This Picture ?

Glazing –Glass

Glass is a potentially hazardous material that must be treated with care. Take for example large sections of glass in a high school corridor during class change. With all the shoving and misstep an accident could occur and glass could be broken. Depending on the location an impact safety glass may be required and to complicate matters the same glass must be a fire safety glass if located within a fire rated partition or door. So imagine the following:



A one hour fire rated corridor with windows placed near doors or close to the floor. Code requires that glass within eighteen inches above of the floor and within three feet of a walking path, or within four feet of a door and below the top of the door, or greater than nine square feet in area, must be impact-safety glass such as tempered or safety plastic glass. Glass within the door itself must also be safety glass and if the door or partition is rated the same glass must be both impact and fire safety glass. Aside from the type of glass there are specific requirements for glass panel size and configuration. The maximum panel size is 1296 square inches (3 feet by 3 feet) and a horizontal frame member (chair rail) must be provided within 24 to 36 inches above the floor. Be advised also that wire glass is now permitted only in existing construction. While wire glass did provide fire safety it also presented a serious casualty hazard when broken. When the person tried to retract his arm from the broken glass the mesh would snag the arm while the glass would lacerate the arm. A kind of catch twenty two condition that should not exist.